

Eman<sup>l</sup>. Bowen Sculp<sup>r</sup>.

11633. f. 43  
THE  
C O C K E R:  
A  
P O E M.

*Imitation of Virgil's Third Georgic.*

HUMBLY INSCRIB'D  
TO THE  
Honourable Society of Sportsmen

AT  
GRANTHAM.

---

By Isaac Hallam.

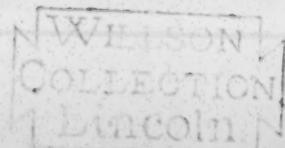
---

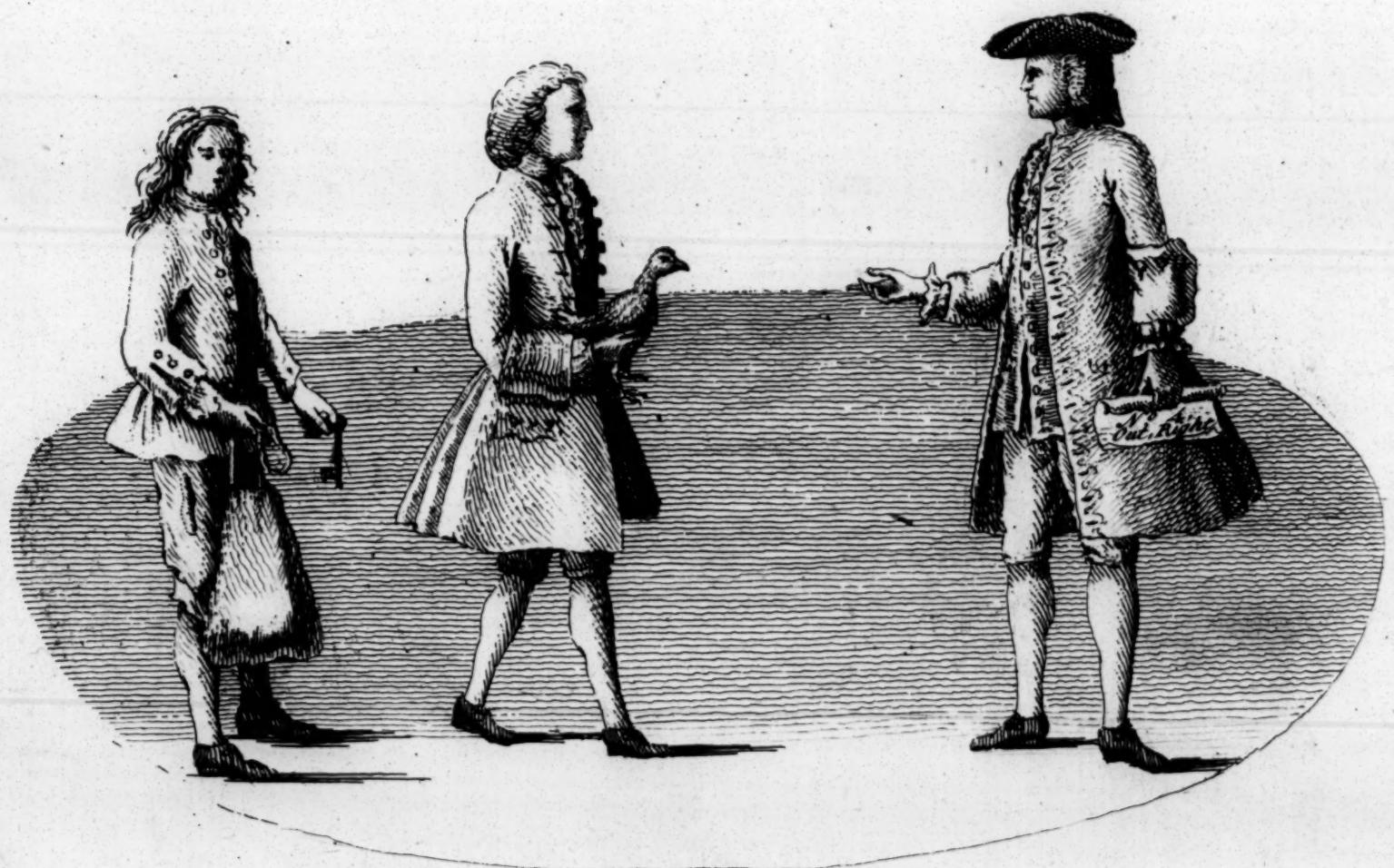
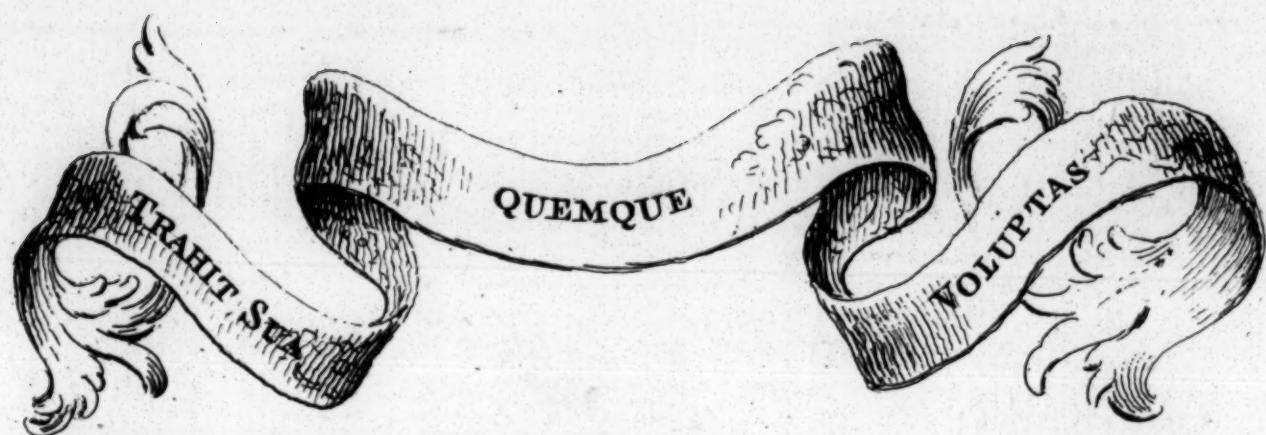
*Ingentes Animos angusto in Pectore versant.*

Virg.

---

Stamford: Printed by Francis Howgrave, 1742.





Eman<sup>t</sup> Bowen Sculp<sup>t</sup>

mm  
110  
120  
130  
140  
150

10 11 12 13 14 15

11633. f. 43  
THE  
C O C K E R:  
A  
P O E M.  
IN  
*Imitation of Virgil's Third Georgic.*  
HUMBLY INSCRIB'D  
TO THE  
Honourable Society of Sportsmen  
AT  
GRANTHAM.

---

By Isaac Hallam.

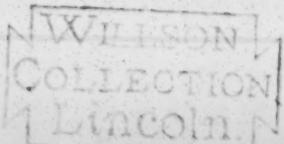
---

*Ingentes Animos angusto in Pectore versant.*

Virg.

---

Stamford: Printed by Francis Howgrave, 1742.





# A LIST of the Subscribers.

## A

His Grace the late Duke of Ancaster  
His Grace the present Duke of Ancaster, Lord Great Chamberlain  
Sam. Abbott, Esq; 2 Books  
Mottm. Andrews, Esq;  
Mr. Rich. Abbott, 2 Books  
Mr. Wm. Agar  
Mr. Charles Allenby  
Mr. Wm. Allenby

## B

Lord Vere Bertie  
Wm. Banks, Esq;  
C. Bate, Esq;  
John Belgrave, Esq;  
E. Bigland, Esq;  
Hen Booth, Esq;  
Thomas Burrell, Esq;  
John Burton, Esq;  
Mr. Skinner Baily  
Mr. John Bartholomew  
Mr. Samuel Bate  
Mr. Joshua Baxter  
Mr. Thomas Beaumont, 2 Books  
Mr. Francis Beaty, Junior  
Mr. Richard Bell  
Mr. Thomas Bennett  
Mr. John Berridge  
Richard Bestoe M. D.  
Mr. John Bishop  
Mr. John Bland  
Mr. John Boughtflower  
Mr. Anthony Boulton  
Mr. Anthony Bowcer  
Mr. Robert Bowcock

Mr. William Bowes  
Mr. James Bowman  
Mr. W. Brecknell, 3 Books  
Mr. J. Brownell  
Mr. Thomas Burton  
Mr. Joseph Breeze

## C

Gilbert Caldicot, Esq;  
Henry Carter, Esq;  
Thomas Chaplin, Esq;  
John Cholmley, Esq;  
John Coltman, Esq;  
John Cotton, Esq;  
Mr. Richard Calthorp  
Mr. T. Chapman  
Mr. Thomas Cheney, 2 Books  
Mr. Joshua Chown, 2 Books  
Mr. William Claypon  
Mr. Joseph Claypon  
Mr. Joseph Cleasby  
Mr. John Clifton  
Mr. Robert Cobb  
Mr. John Cole  
Mr. John Collins  
Mr. William Cooke  
Mr. Richard Crane  
Mr. Henry Cumbrey  
Mr. John Curtois  
Mr. George Cuthbert

## D

Mr. George Denshire, Jun.  
Mr. Langton Denshire  
Mr. Thomas Dalley

## E

The Right Honoutable the Earl of Exeter.  
Mr. Richard Everitt  
Mr. William Everitt  
Mr. Thomas Elston

## F

Francis Fane, Esq;  
Hatcher Fish, Esq;  
Mr. William Falkner  
Mr. Philip Falkner  
Mr. Samuel Foster  
Mr. Thomas Fowler  
Mr. John Francis  
Mr. John Frisby

## G

William Goodhall, Esq;  
Jackson Grave, Esq;  
G. Gregory, Esq;  
Mr. William Garfitt  
Mr. B. Graham, 2 Books  
Mr. John Graham  
Mr. Lewis Griffin  
Mr. Thomas Grounds

## H

Lord J. Hobert  
Sir Henry Harpur, Bart.  
C. Hartopp, Esq;  
William Hatt, Esq;  
Charles Hatt, Esq;  
George Heneage, Esq;  
Christopher Hildyard, Esq;  
Mr. Cheyney Hallam  
Mr. John Hallam  
Mr. Dan. Hallett, 2 Books

# A LIST of the Subscribers.

Mr. John Harrison  
Mr. Thomas Hardy  
Mr. William Hardy  
Mr. Thomas Harrold  
Mr. Joseph Hodgskin  
Mr. Brian Hodgson  
Mr. John Holgate  
Mr. Francis Howgrave  
Mr. Thomas Howgrave  
Mr. Lewis Hurst  
Mr. William Hutchinson

## J

Mr. Stephen Jackson  
Mr. George Jolland

## K

Mr. Richard Kelham

## L

Mathew Lister, Esq;  
Cooper Long, Esq;  
Dominick Lee, M. D.  
Mr. John Lane  
Mr. John Love  
Mr. Henry Laybourne

## M

Lord William Manners  
Edward Markham, Esq;  
Ephraim Miller, Esq,  
Mr. Henry Marshal  
Mr. Humphry May, Jun.  
Mr. Bryan Meeds  
Mr. John Metheringham  
Mr. John Metheringham,  
*Junior*  
Mr. Samuel Massey  
Mr. Robert Miller  
Mr. Michael Mosley

## N

J. Nash, Esq;  
N. N. Newcome, Esq;  
Mr. John Newton  
Mr. Robert Newton  
Mr. William Newton  
Mr. James Nicholson

## P

Randel Peck, Esq;  
Henry Pennant, Esq;  
James Pennyman, Esq;  
John Proby, Esq;  
Mr. William Papworth  
Mr. John Parish  
Mr. Ed. Parish  
Mr. Thomas Peacock  
Mr. John Pell  
Mr. William Pool  
Mr. John Proudlove

## R

Mr. Theophilus Randes  
Mr. John Rashdall  
Mr. Charles Raven  
Mr. Thomas Richmond  
Mr. Jos. Robertson

## S

Lord Robert Sutton  
Francis Sanderson, Esq;  
Mr. John Seagrave  
Mr. Thomas Searle  
Mr. Robert Searle  
Mr. William Shepherd  
Mr. John Smith  
Mr. Richard Southwell  
Mr. Ed. Stevens, *Junior*

## T

Sir Thomas Trollope, Bart.  
John Tooley, Esq;  
Thomas Trollope, Esq;  
T. M. Trollope, Esq;  
Edmund Turnor, Esq;  
Edmund Turnor, Jun. Esq,  
Mr. C. Tanner,  
Mr. Francis Thirkill  
Mr. Augustine Thorne ton  
Mr. T. Thistlewood, 2 Books  
Mr. Thomas Timberland  
Mr. John Tonge  
Mr. John Tunnard  
Mr. Trist. Twells, 3 Books  
Mr. M. Tyson

## V

Robert Vyner, Esq;  
Robert Vyner, Jun. Esq;  
Mr. William Vent

## W

William Welby, Esq;  
R. Welby, Esq;  
J. Wynne, Esq;  
Mr. Abraham Wallet, Jun.  
Mr. Thomas Waltham  
Mr. John Watson  
Mr. John Wayet  
Mr. William Wayet  
Mr. Samuel Webster  
Mr. Samuel Welfitt  
Mr. Ja. West, 6 Books  
Mr. Wm. West, 2 Books  
Mr. Stephen West  
Mr. West Wheldale  
Mr. Sam Whiting, 2 Books.  
Mr. Noble Thomas Wright  
4 Books  
Mr. Richard Wright  
Mr. John Wignell

THE  
DEDICATION,  
TO THE  
Honourable Society of Sportsmen  
AT  
GRANTHAM.

GENTLEMEN,

**A**S the Diversion of Cock-Fighting is daily growing into Esteem, and has for several Years been my favourite Amusement, and also attended with a Series of Success, I humbly beg Leave to offer my Opinion towards the Improvement of the present English Breed, for tho' generally supposed a Diversion peculiar to this Nation, 'tis truly, of no modern Date, but divers Centuries ago practis'd in the Isle of Rhodes, and also at Pergamus, as appears by the following Quotation from Pliny the Historian, who says in the 10th Book and 21st Chapter of

A

his

## The Dedication.

his natural History (viz.) " That every Year at the City of Pergamus  
" was exhibited openly to the People a solemn Shew of Cock-Fighting,  
" and where the Game Sort were in the greatest Perfection;" from  
whence we may reasonably infer its Origin deriv'd, and which probable  
Account methinks contradicts the common Opinion of their Degeneracy  
abroad, and which I rather believe is owing more to improper Manage-  
ment than any other Reason; so in order to propagate and establish the  
genuine Kind, I have presum'd to offer the following Essay for your Ap-  
probation, and consequently have address'd it to you as the most distin-  
guishing Judges.

Tho' notwithstanding these Sentiments in Breeding of Game-Fowl are  
govern'd by the most strict Observations and Variety of repeated Tryals,  
the only sure Means whereby to form a proper Judgment, yet, as it was  
only design'd for an innocent Amusement to pass an idle Hour with, so  
I flatter myself before you precipitately condemn it, that you will candid-  
ly consider this Precept of Horace, (viz.)

— Si quid novisti rectius istic,  
Candidus imperti, si non, his utere mecum.

For since Gentlemen of the first Rank have encouraged the Diversion,  
and are grown solicitous in Breeding, as being truly sensible they are  
sooner furnished with a sufficient Number of Cocks than a compleat Stud  
of Horses, and consequently as Cocking is attended with less Expence  
than Horse-Racing, and likewise not so liable to Frauds, of which I am  
well assur'd the modern Grooms have given the most flagrant Proofs;  
perhaps this Attempt of mine, to promote a more curious Breed, may  
induce and spirit up some more judicious Sportsman to accomplish what  
I have but too cursorily handled.

Did

## The Dedication.

Did Gentlemen of valetudinary Habits but consider that Hunting or Racing are too active and laborious Exercises for such as are of thin and emaciated Constitutions, I am apt to believe they would not so eagerly pursue such Diversion, so hazardous to their Health, and even frequently their Lives, especially as I am conscious a greater Share of Exercise attends the Breeding and Management of a Number of Fowl sufficient for any common Match than what the generality of Breeders are appriz'd of.

For 'till Gentlemen naturally take as much Pleasure in the Breeding Part as they do in the Fighting, 'tis certainly great Odds that they ever attain to or acquire any compleat Breed or Number of Fowl; since one Error committed in that Branch may even effect and ruin a whole Race, and consequently loose two or three Seasons in Breeding.

For what Method or Rules soever can avail if due Regard is not paid to this particular Care, (viz.) as Game-Fowl are frequently hatch'd under Dunghil Hens, it is incumbent, methinks, on the judicious Breeder to inspect and shyer every Seat of Eggs before the Time of Hatching, in order to prevent any other Sort from being casually laid amongst them, a Caution I am afraid too many have pass'd by as trifling and indifferent, and for want of which not improbably destroy'd many a compleat Breed, and surely this one Reflection shou'd prompt every Breeder's Inclinations to be strictly curious.

Tho' truly 'tis not only proper on that Account, but also to ease the Sitting Hen, in throwing aside those which are addle, and from being crowded with too great a Number, a Fault indeed too many Breeders are guilty of in the Winter Season.

## The Dedication.

Thus, Gentlemen, if the Method I have prescrib'd be honour'd with your Approbation, I hope it will in some measure make amends for the Ruggedness and Incligance of the Poetry; however, if it contributes but in any Respect to your future Diversion and Amusement, it will entirely add to the Satisfaction of

*GENTLEMEN,*

*Your most oblig'd,*

*And devoted humble Servant,*

**Isaac Hallam.**





THE  
**C O C K E R.**  
A  
P O E M.

**Y**E British Sons, and all ye tuneful Nine,  
Propitious now your sacred Infl'ence join ;

Whilst I, adven'trous Bard, presume to soar

With callow Wing, and trackless Paths explore ;

In

In Maro's heav'nly Strain sublimely raise

My artless Theme, and crown my daring Lays,

And tho' too rash I quote his sacred Name,

Let not my Muse the god-like Bard prophane,

Or shroud the Palm of his immortal Fame.

A Patriot Zeal now fires my grateful Heart,

To sing the warlike Cock, and Breeding Rules im-

part.

For oh ! what Debt Britannia's Sons must owe,

Beyond whate'er these artless Lays bestow,

The

## The warlike British Cock, whose valiant Race

\* Once bless'd the Land with Liberty and Peace.

Attend

\* The following Account, to which the preceding Lines allude, is recorded in some of our English Histories.

In early Times a foreign Enemy commencing a War, an English Gentleman then Resident at his Court happily procuring some Game Cocks, sent an Invitation to some of that Nation to partake of the Diversion, whose Unacquaintance with their undaunted Fierceness, and natural Enmity so surprizingly discouraged them, by suggesting those Talents to be equally or rather greater in the hardy Briton, that they immediately relinquish'd the Thoughts of War, and left us to reap the Advantage of their Cowardice by a settled Peace and Tranquility.

Attend ye Sportsmen, whose superior Sway  
A Sanction gives, and guide the genial Lay,  
Indulge a while the Poet's wand'ring Muse,  
And all the COCKER in the Bard infuse,  
Till I the Breeding Art presume to trace,  
And sing the warlike Genius of the plamy Race.  
But first the Sire, propitious Muse, declare,  
Whose *Shape* distinguish with peculiar Care,  
Since

Since what the curious-form'd acquire in Height,

The disproportion'd loose by useless Weight,

For oft o'rematch'd the shapeless Pullen show,

By Legs too short, and Forehands form'd too low.

High-bearing Fowl th' Advantage most acquire

To charge the Foe, and ward against his Ire,

Whilst Cocks that mope beneath the tow'ring Foe,

By lofty Springs unnerve their fruitless Blow.

Thus Duck-leg'd Fowl with curv'd or dinted Breast,

And Forehands short become the Sportsman's Jest.

The Shape approv'd and by the Muse display'd,

Shou'd like the conick Sugar-Loaf be made.

Whose taper Point shou'd nicely form the Tail,

And o'er the Breast the broader Part prevail,

While lengthy Forehands Sportsmen chiefly prize,

That in the Form of Rainbow circling rise.

The

The Feeder thus exulting Fondness shows,  
 And lur'd by Shape with Emulation glows,

When form'd like \* BEAU his dext'rous Hand  
 displays

A fav'rite Cock, that vig'rous Life betrays.

Then wisely cull from all the Warrior Kind

A blooming Sire, that suits the Marks defin'd,

Full breasted form'd, yet taper, thin, behind,

In all the stately Pride of Nature dress'd,

With glitt'ring Plume, and florid youthful Crest,

B 2

Whose

\* A favourite Cock of the Author's, so call'd from his curious Shape.

Whose nervous Limbs stretch'd o're the grassy  
Plain,

With Hawk-like Beak, and piercing watchful Eye,

Prompt to deceive, or ready to defy

His adverse Foe, when pitted in the Ring

They wounding clash, and flutter on the Wing,

Till Death alone their envious Wars compound,

And force the conquer'd Foe to bite the Ground.

Sing

Sing Muse the Cause, the fatal Source disclose,

Whence such dire Enmity remorseless 'rose.

When Nature first the warlike Cock design'd,

Venus and Mars, superior Infl'ence join'd,

To fwell his Heart and form his daring Soul,

Where Love and Jealousy tumultuous roll.

For soon as Love his youthful Breast inspires,

Indignant Rage his haughty Genius fires.

The

The tempting Fair he seeks with eager Pace,

And woo's her to him with peculiar Grace;

Now proudly struts, elate with martial Pride,

Now drops his Wings, and stalks along her Side,

Now boldly treads, and sooths the yielding Bride;

Then sounds Alarm, and jealous of his Foe,

Spleen, Rage, and Love, alternate Passions, glow:

Each am'rous Glance the daring Rival shews,

Or Step advanc'd, his jealous Wrath pursues.

For

For Love's Impulse, exempt of Reason's Aid,

In sensual Brutes is uncontroll'd obey'd ;

But god-like Reason, crown'd with ev'ry Grace,

Distinguis'd shines in Man's superior Race,

To calm his Passions and his Will control,

And form the Conduct of his nobler Soul.

Thus fir'd with Love and stung with proud Dif-

dain,

Th' imperious Chief intrepid stalks the Plain,

Whilst

Whilst scouring o'er the Lawn and verdant Meads,

His swelling Voice the furious Lion dreads.

The Cock exulting with elated Crow,

And Pinions sounding dares the haughty Foe ;

Nor shuns the War, nor from his Rival flies,

But Victor reigns, or all disdainful dies.

Hence jealous Fears th' intrepid Warrior fire,

Incessant rage and future Wars inspire.

His

His Colour now remark ; the Best are said  
To be the Tawny, Black, the Grey and Red.

The *Cuckoo* shun, a soft degen'rate Race,

Which oft th' intrepid Foe reluctant face.

Yet modern Sportsmen with Indiff'rence prize

What colour'd Fowl you fight, so Dagger-heel'd  
they rise,

And facing Danger spurn the threat'ning Foe,

Swift to revenge returning Blow for Blow.

Thus form'd the *Sire*: Again, O Muse, display  
Thy sacred Pow'r, and tune th' harmonious Lay,  
Whilst I, presumptuous Bard, progressive rhyme,  
The Season sing, and fix the Breeding Time,  
When Nature prompts and vig'rous Spring con-  
spires  
To warm the circling Blood with genial Fires.

*March, April, May*, judicious Breeders find  
The *only* Months to propagate their Kind.

Let

Let not too *small a Size* your Breed disgrace,

But timely warn'd, avoid the dwarfish Race.

The puny Strain will soon too languid grow

From yonder *parent* and *progeny* of *small* *size*.

To dart the Heel, and spurn the threat'ning Foe :

Then fix betimes the Hens and blooming Sire,

Since early Fowl superior Size acquire.

For Autumn Chicks will scarce the Rearing pay,

From *small* *size* *parent* and *progeny* of *small* *size*.

So small the starv'ing Brood, so Duck-leg'd they ;

Which frequent vary from the Stock they grow,

For numb'd with Morning Dews their Limbs advance too slow.

Oft in three circling Years his sprightly Bloom

Impair'd we find by too great Length of Plume,

His ample Hack too loose a Texture wears,

And dangling o'er his Throat a Muff-like Plumage bears.

This if discern'd, no more increase his Breed,

But substitute Another in his stead ;

Lest languid grown he balk the craving Hen,

Deceive your Fancy and you breed in vain ;

Tho' if the Sire in vig'rous Bloom appears,

And gayly plum'd, dread not his Length of Years.

The Hens indeed a longer Date I find,

Retain the Pow'r to propagate their Kind ;

And by judicious Sportsmen 'tis agreed

That on the *Female Strain* depends the nobler

Breed :

Nor

Nor did I once from \* RUCKING Hens e'er  
know

Diff'rence in Breed, which some pretend to shew.

But shun those *Eggs* where Sol's diffusive Rays  
Dart thro' their Shells, and with Refulgence blaze,

For

---

\* The Rucking of a Hen is a peculiar Cry for three or four Days before Sitting or Brooding her Eggs, and is only an Impulse of Nature, shewing her intense Desire of producing her Kind.

This some injudiciously suppose a State of Degeneracy, and the Reason they assign is, That her Eggs at that Time are remarkably smaller, but truly, they don't consider that the Egg is before impregnate, and the future Progress of the Chick has no Respect to the Size of the Egg, but only requires a proper Warmth to animate and increase it.

The Clucking of a Hen is also a distinguishable Note from the former, tho' not discernable till after Hatching, and is probably design'd to induce the young Brood to follow her, and covey together; and likewise to express her Tenderness in Regard to their Sustenance and Safety.

For such the vital Pow'r extinct declare,

Will addle prove, and frustrate all your Care.

Thus curious Breeders by Inspection know

The forming Chick's impregnate Embryo,

'Ere Incubation half its Pow'r conveys

In rip'ning Life, and \* *Shy'ring* this they Phrase.

As

---



---

\* The Shy'ring of Eggs is perform'd in the following Manner, (*viz.*) the Hen having sat eight or nine Days, take an Egg in one Hand and hold it against the Light with the Crown or broad End uppermost, then place your other Hand on the Top or a little over it, and you will perceive it settl'd in the Shell, and if the Part so fall'n shews dark, it denotes a Bird; but if clear or fluctuating and streak'd with Light, it implies the contrary.

As various Hens in diff'rent Shapes appear,

So various Eggs a Form as diff'rent bear ;

Impregnate Females in the \* *Round* prevail,

And those *Oblong* distinguish'd shew the Male.

Preserve your Eggs, with latent Chick replete,

From chilling Cold and too intense a Heat ;

For each Extream impairs the vital Pow'r,

And rip'ning Embryo's swell the Egg no more.

Nor

---

\* 'Tis generally observ'd that the roundest Egg proves a Pullet, and the longest a Cock.

Nor let them long in one Position lie,

But gently turn, and mark with cautious Eye

The lower Part, and oft alternate move

The upper down, and neather Part above,

For in one Posture fix'd, the Curious say,

The pond'rous Volk's weak Ligaments decay,

Which Egg no more prolifick Pow'r retains,

But all unbrac'd a lifeless Mass remains ;

This \* Nature shews, th' experienc'd Breeder's  
Guide,

Lest thro' the fluid White th' inclining Yolk subside.

The wond'rous Shell, concreted Humour, flows  
From various Salts, that diff'rent Parts compose,

Whose concave Side a filmy Texture lines,

Cements the Whole, and all the Bird enshrines ;

Whose

---

\* 'Tis frequently observ'd, during the Time of a Hen's sitting or brooding her Eggs, that she variously turns and removes them from one side of the Nest to the other, which Observation not improbably gave Rise to the approv'd Method of turning and moving them two or three Times a Week in the aforesaid Manner, as the most necessary Means for preserving them sound; especially when purpos'd for keeping any considerable Time.

Whose forming Life at first the White sustains,

But more advanc'd the grosser Yolk maintains.

When tort'ring Pangs the wracking Stone betray,

Or acrid Salts Life's purple Streams convey ;

When Reins inflam'd the turgid Vessels bind,

And serous Parts no Percolation find,

Whence stagnate Urine forms intestine Strife,

And languid Nature drags on ling'ring Life,

Th' \* alkalious Pow'rs, fair Health's restoring

Balm,

Absorb the pungent Salts, and oft their Fury calm.

Since various Natures diff'rent Fowl retain,

And by Instinct affect their kindred Strain.

Then

---

\* Egg-Shells being clear'd from their Skins, dry'd, and finely powder'd, and taken the Quantity of a Drachm two or three Times a Day, are recommended by Decker as a peculiar Remedy in Nephritick Disorders attended with a Suppression of Urine. *N. B.* If a Decoction of Marsh-Mallows, or a Solution of Gum Arabick, an Ounce in a Quaït of Water, be drank a Gill at a Time after each Dose of the Powders, it would probably contribute to their farther Efficacy.

Then fix, by Nature sway'd, a \* *Sister Race*,

Whose Friendship join'd may court the Male's  
Embrace ;

A motley Tribe may chance deceive your Care,

Since Eggs from various Hens such nice Resem-  
blance bear.

Three sprightly Hens indulge the am'rous  
Male,

Nor will, shou'd more be join'd, your Breeding fail.

Let

---

\* The Difficulty and Hazard of distinguishing the respective Eggs of various Hens, and the uncertainty of the several sorts being equally Good, sufficiently shew the Imprudence of Breeding from a mixt Sort together ; and consequently a necessary Caution, to breed from a Sett of full Sisters.

Let Cocks with Pullets breed, and Stags with  
Hens,

'Tis such whose Race will recompence your Pains;

Yet Cocks with Hens, if not by Age impair'd,

By modern Breeders chiefly are prefer'd,

Tho' Stags with Pullets join'd I frequent find

In Heels and Mettle too preserve their Kind,

And oft, when dipt in Blood, their Hearts exceed

The martial Fierceness of the aged Breed;

When

When dying too, our hopeless Thoughts de-  
ceive,

Kindled to Wrath their gasping Lives reprieve,

And to their adverse Foes swift Death bequeath ;

Of which my fav'rite Fowl, the \* *Jarnil* Strain,

Beyond Dispute th' asserted Truth maintain.

Thus Want of Heels the Reason true declares

Their Breed declines, when Fowl advance in  
Years,

Since

---

\* A Brood Cock walk'd at one *Jarnil*'s, to whose Breed the Appellation of *Jarnil* was given.

Since oft the youthful Breed more active are

And mettled prove, than sluggish ag'd, by far.

\* Yet ne'er on MAINS let Stags be rashly  
try'd,

But full grown Cocks th' important Match de-  
cide;

For Stags tho' glowing more with martial Fire,

O'repow'r'd by stronger Cocks too frequent tire:

These

---



---

\* A necessary Caution to avoid being deceiv'd in Stags, which are not so easily distinguish'd when early bred, and sought late in the Season.

These diff'rent Marks peculiar to the Race  
 Of Stags and Cocks, ye curious Sportsmen, trace ;

In Stags the Spurs a *rougher* Surface wear,  
 And circling round a Ridge distinctly bear ; }  
*Unbent* and *shorter* too the *blunter* Points appear ;

But those in Cocks more *taper* form'd we find,  
*Curv'd, longer, smooth*, and of the horny Kind.

Breed near akin, nor cross too oft the Strain ;  
 Lest by too frequent Change you breed in vain.

Nor scrup'lous shun, nor such Distinction heed,

What some erroneous style \* *incestuous* Breed ;

By

---



---

\* 'Tis doubtless an absurd Opinion to think any Breed incestuous that springs from the Brute Creation, and having read that the Race of Turkish Horses seldom degenerates if it is not adulterated by too frequently Changing, I was induc'd to make Tryal of the same Method in the Breeding of Game Fowl, and which probably would succeed as well in the Generation of Sheep and other Brutes, if not so idly perverted by the mistaken Notion of being *Incestuous*, however I have found it effectually answer in Poultry, and indeed recommend it as the most infallible Rule, to breed from Parent and Offspring, (viz) Father and Daughter, or Mother and Son, or Brother and Sister, which in the Sportsman's Phrase is term'd, *Full Blood*.

I have also known the Breed exceeding fine where the Brood Hens and Cock are all out of a Hen

By crossing oft the Race degenerate grows,

And all the *Dungbil* propagated shows;

Let Hens and Cock, to form your future Race,

From the same Hen their warlike Genius trace;

E 2

Their

---

a Hen, but got by a different Cock, or *vice versa*, where the Brood Cock and Hens are got by the same Cock, but out of a different Hen, tho' I chiefly approve of the former; the Hen's Strain being generally allow'd superior and more certain than the Cock's.

Their kindred Strains will nobler Blood inspire,  
And all their Offspring crown with martial Fire:  
Th' inverted Rule observe will oft prevail,  
When Cock and Hens spring from one sprightly  
Male:  
Yet ne'er on *One* peculiar Strain rely,  
But diff'rent Fowl with nice Distinction try ;  
Three various Sorts sufficient Change you'll find  
For twice ten Years to raise the nobler Kind ;

For

For when repeated Tryals shew the Race

To Mars devote, that Breed alone embrace,

Whose fatal Heels, enrag'd with Ire, impair

Some noble Part and Scenes of Slaughter bear,

When at each mouthing Blow, or flying Spar

The hostile Chiefs engage in direful War ;

Since HEEELERS more distinguish'd Merit

claim,

Than Cocks ennobl'd with superior Game.

Shou'd

Shou'd e'er a spurious Cock your Pullen tread,  
Reject their Eggs till *Four or Five* are laid,  
And then, Experience proves, tho' some deny,  
A Change ensue, and the false Embryo die ;  
The former Genius of the nobler Strain  
A fresh reviv'd, and all restor'd again.  
For since by changing Cocks we frequent find,  
The Hen's prolifick Pow'r a while declin'd,

Imagine

Imagine not the whole connected Lay'r

The Taint receive, or so degenerate are,

For joint Consent the genial Fire must grace,

Or unprolifick proves the Male's Embrace :

Four Months I've known a blooming Hen to  
lay,

Nor once indeed a Rucking e'er betray ;

And some, too vainly prejudic'd, advise

To wait that Time, more nice than truly wife.

Such

Such \* *Notions* then ye Speculists disclaim,  
Since Nature's Laws th' Hypothesis condemn,

For

---

\* As some Objection may arise from the Improbability of the preceeding Argument, I humbly beg Leave to transcribe a Passage from Mr. *Humphrey's* Translation of *Nature Display'd* Vol. 3. Page 308.

" No Body, says he, has hitherto been able to give any intelligible or satisfactory Account concerning the Cause of this Principle of Fecundity in an Egg ; we only know in general, that it results from the concurrent Act of two Animals, the one Male, the other Female.

Thus, as the Learned byas'd only by Theory, leave undetermin'd such nice Speculations ; so I presume it a reasonable Inference for the Support of my Opinion, since confirm'd by the Testimony of repeated Tryals, (viz.) that an Alteration of the Strain ensues from the Removal or Change of one Cock to another, tho' the prolific Pow'r continues for several Eggs after the first Cock is taken away, if no other immediately succeeds him.

However, to convince the Speculist, that his Hypotheses are repugnant to Practice, I humbly entreat the Curious would try the Experiment, as the only means to solve such inexplicable Difficulties.

For Practice join'd to Theory we find

Best forms the Judgement, and improves the Mind.

Since Errors oft deceive the Breeder's Care

Be strictly cautious and Mistakes beware ;

“ Distinguish all betimes with branding Fire,

“ To note the Tribe, the Lineage, and the Sire,

Nor e'er let Indolence so far prevail,

To charge your Mem'ry with the long Detail,

“ Dryd. Virg.

F

But

But let peculiar Registers declare

The martial Race, and various Kinds you rear ;

Which to reserve to raise the future Stock,

And which to battle with the warrior Cock.

By Practice taught, the modern Sportsman's  
Guide,

Let *maiden Fowl* th' important Main decide ;

Since such, alone, the nobler Strain declare,

For *old fought Cocks* deceive the nicest Care.

To

To crown your Judgement, and your Art display  
With more Success ; this just Remark obey ;  
Let ample Store compleat your warlike Strain,  
And undisturb'd in private Walks remain ;  
Till adverse Foes, by Valour prompt conspire  
With blooming Spring to wake the martial Fire ;  
Since by removing oft they tainted grow ;  
For such we find reflect a faded Glow.

Yet chiefly note, e'er you a Contract close,  
A single Match, or nobler Main propose,  
Reflect betimes, and Rashness ne'er betray  
But view your Flock, and strictly take Survey ;  
Ne'er on their clashing Heels *alone* depend,  
Nor let those flatt'ring Hopes deceive your Friend.  
Three Months at least let Ceres' bounteous Hand  
Open her Stores, and all her Wealth expand ;  
Since

Since half-bred Fowl, if plenteous corn'd we find

Will beat the nobler Game when starv'd or pin'd;

Tho' hand-strew'd Walks oft damp their martial  
Fire;

For Cocks so fed inactive Sloth acquire ;

Then those distinguish with peculiar Care  
Where ratling Flails re-eccho thro' the Air,

Alternate found and thrash the bearded Ear;

Where limpid Streams thro' sandy Cliffs distil,

And grateful Bow'rs o'reshade the murm'ring Rill;

For

For oft we find the Plamy Race resort  
To lonely Shades, and friendly Shelter court,  
When rising Tempests swell the foaming Tide,  
And ruffling Gales o're crack'ling Forests ride,  
Or when the Fields a hoary Landskip show  
Congeal'd by Frost, or spangled o're with Snow,  
Or when the Dog-Star reigns, and Heats intensely  
glow ;  
When rolling Thunder shocks the tim'rous Swain,  
And dreadful Lightning flashes o're the Plain,

When

When pitchy Clouds foreshew the ratling Show'r,

And smoaking down the Skies impetuous pour,

Whence trembling *Atheists* dread approaching Fate,

And Heav'n's last Trumpet all disponding wait.

The Heathy-Soil befts suits the warlike Race;

For Clay bound Fields their glossy Plumes deface,

And tillage Walks alone the thriving Poultry grace,

Where various Ricks of Straw with scatter'd Corn,

Invite them early to salute the Morn.

Whence

Whence Exercise their craving Hunger fires,

And blooming Health with active Life inspires ;

Which ruddy Look, the sure Prognostick, shows

When o're the waving Plume a shining Lustre glows.

Oft too the Tail, when curling down it sways

Exempt from Pens, a blooming Cock displays.

As Nile's vast Streams at certain Times o'reflow,

The Soil renew, and various Fruits bestow,

So blasting Boreas when the Gods command,

At certain Seasons taints the fruitful Land.

Then Muse describing mark the rank Disease,

That does the Poultry Flock contagious seize,

Involving oft with Havock-wasting Pow'r

Whole Broods of Fowl, that stalk the Gran'ry Door.

The noisome *Roop* that from the Norril springs,

A putrid Gore, and dire Destruction brings,

Incrusts the Tongue, and all the Surface dies

With livid Taint, that noxious Blood implies,

Which faded Plume and flagging Wings denote,

With gasping, breathless Yawn, and wheezing  
Throat,

And sneezing oft; portentous Omen too,

With scale-like Tongue, the sickly Gravis shew,

Which some the Pip define, and idly dream

Impairs the Tongue, and taints the vital Stream ;

Which

Which Plaint from muddy Pool and standing  
Lake,

Their craving parch'd up Crops too craving take,

When thirsty Febris swells the sanguine Tide,

And drinks the purple Life that does revolving  
glide.

Observe, th' Infection claims your timely Aid,

For swift as Light'ning does the Mischief spread,

Then quickly, from the *Sound*, the *Sickly* part,

Lest more they taint, and baffle all your Art,

Since coop'd too close the rank Effluvias rise,

Which oft infect with frothy Streams their Eyes.

This sov'reign Balm and grand Specifick note,

To smooth the Hoarsness of the wheezing Throat;

Green Rue and Sorrel shread, whose mingled

Pow'rs,

Compound with Celadine and \* Sulphur Flow'rs,

And

---

---

\* 'Tis necessary to add a little Flower of Brimstone to the Recipe, not only as a proper Ingredient, but also as a requisite Article to form the Mass into Pills.

And recent \* Cream from neigb'ring Dairies  
brought,

By curious Art to due Consistence wrought,

O'th' former Three a just proportion'd Share,

With Pondus Omnium of the Last prepare ;

In artful Pills of mod'rate Nutmeg size,

Which soon I've found retrieve their gasping Lives;

And which alternate Night let each receive,

Nor idly hesitate but timely give,

When

\* Fresh Butter.

When weak Digestion curbs the thriving State,

And drooping Life imparts a languid Heat,

Receipts abound, but this I most approve

To stop the spreading Taint, and all their Ills remove.

Propitious Nine, again the Bard inspire,

Tune my rapt Soul and aid the warbling Lyre.

Sublime in Verse remark the sanguine Plain,

The hostile Combat, and the various Slain ;

With

With martial Fire the diff'rent Scenes display,

And image all the Beauties of the Fray.

Distinguish'd note where rang'd in circling Rows,

The spacious Ring superior Sportsmen shows.

Where Pride eclips'd no more her Infl'ence sways,

But social Freedom spreads her chearful Rays,

Where Dukes and Lords the grand Diversion crown,

Like Phœbus shine, and dart Refulgence down ;

But

But hark the Drum ! th' approaching Combat  
shews,  
Whose grateful Sound the waiting Crowd pursues,  
When lo ! distinguish'd Sportsmen born along  
With mingled Crowds, the Pit promiscuous throng,  
Where various Bets engage their utmost Care,  
As diff'rent Parties diff'rent Fancies bear,  
Till Stakes requir'd unstring'd the Purses pour,  
From various Fobs disclos'd, a Golden Show'r ;

Thus

Thus circling round the glittering Guineas fly,

As various Odds become the gen'ral Cry,

And \* Five to Two the nice Advent'ers ply ;

Now Hope and Fear attend their dubious Fate,

Which various Sportsmen with Impatience wait ;

H

Who

---



---

\* Five to two is a common Bett with the Groom Porters, when the Cocks on both Sides are judg'd of an Equality, against naming the Side which wins the two following Battles, but if either Party be judg'd superior to th other, their Bett is then Five and a Half to two against the weakest winning two together.

Who discompos'd now chide the Feeder's Stay,

When lo! they come, and murmur'ring clear the Way,

Stride o'er the Pit with blooming Verdure spread,

For Elegance and Use commodious made,

To shew the Marks that adverse Sides require,

Which quells Debate, and sooths the kindling Ire;

Yet flush'd with Spleen, and red'ning with Surprize,

Unbag the Fowl, to feast their longing Eyes.

Now

Now hostile Rage each daring Foe maintains,  
And Death as Fate inclines alternate Reigns,  
In various Shapes the missive Blow appears,  
And dire Destruction 'midst the Conflict bears ;  
Now purple Life unloads the turgid Veins,  
And gushing down the crowded Circus stains,  
Or stagnates, swells the Throat, and vital Air re- }  
strains,  
Contending Sportsmen now repining sit,  
Whilst anxious Fear furrounds the gazing Pit.

As Death inclines and Fate impels the Blow,

These gayly smile, and those indignant glow;

Oft times the Brave a fatal Darkness mourn,

And stalking round, their Necks distorted turn,

Enrag'd to meet the Foe, now peck the Ground,

Rise at their Breasts, and spurning dart a Wound,

Now fractur'd Bones unnerve their warlike Pow'r,

And now the vanquish'd on their Pinions cow'r;

Yet

Yet oft when *Chanc'd* a swifter Exit share,  
Dart from the Foe and spring aloft in Air,  
And whilst the Crowd attend their dubious State,  
Down, down, they fall, and soon resign to Fate.  
  
As curious Artists diff'rent Skill disclose,  
The various Weapon, diff'rent Temper shows,  
Whose Length and Form indeed we various find,  
As diff'rent Fancy sways the Sportsman's Mind ;

Yet

Yet by Experience taught the *longest* Size,

And those which bending from the Socket rise,

Superior Judges most distinguish'd prize ;

Now curving Points too soft a Temper bear ;

And now too hard their Brittleness declare ;

Now on the Plain the treach'rous Weapons lye,

Now wing'd in Air the shiver'd Fragments fly ;

Surpriz'd, chagrin'd, th' incautious Feeders gaze,

And \*Smith alone, ingenious Artist, praise ;

The

---

\* Mr. Thomas Smith, near Katherine-Street in the Strand, being allow'd the most curious and noted Maker of Silver Cock-Weapons.

The Valiant now in vain assail the Foe,

And fix'd as Fate no sad Reluctance show,

But tho' disarm'd still meet the Victor's Ire,

Glow with Revenge, and in their Wrath expire;

Now prostrate lye extended on the Glade,

Th' insulting Victor trampling o're the Dead.

Yet, gen'rous Muse, with mild persuasive Art,

Transpose the Scene, and play the friendly Part ;

Whene'er

Whene'er contending Parties clam'rous jar,  
And Bets disputed swell the verbal War,  
Let sage Reflection calmer Thoughts inspire,  
Compose the Discord, and reclaim their Ire ;  
By Candour sway'd ye Sportsmen hence restore  
The passive Mind, and rude Debate give o're,  
Submit to Ref'rence and contend no more :  
For shou'd precarious Fortune smile or frown,  
Let social Converse your Diversion crown,

Nor

( 61 )

Nor Party-Feuds foment, rekindling Strife,

*But bring the with'ring Olive back to Life.*

F I N I S.



WILLSON  
COLLECTION  
Lincoln.



